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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the belief that as English rapidly infiltrates Native American cultures, school programs for teaching and maintaining native languages are not working. It suggests that Native American children who learn English first and their heritage languages second have difficulty learning the structures of their ancestral languages because of their differences from English. However, because they learn vocabulary well, they develop a pidginized form, often with English grammatical and phonological structures and native language vocabulary. Many people do not consider this pidgin language the real language and assert that the language programs are not producing fluent speakers. This paper recommends that people accept the languages as they are spoken today as new forms of Native American languages. It summarizes research on the relationship between culture contact and linguistic change among British Columbia's Kwakwaka'wakw, who are experiencing a similar situation with their language, Kwak'wala. It asserts that although Kwak'wala appears to be a dying language, it is being maintained as a marker of cultural identity in certain contexts. After discussing dying languages and new languages (pidgins, creoles, and mixed languages) and suggesting that mixed languages are acceptable forms of language, the paper recommends focusing on language change rather than language death. (SM)

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The Development of "New" Languages in Native American Communities

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The Development of "New" Languages in Native American Communities

I have been attending the annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference (SILC) since 1999, and have presented papers there faithfully every year. SILC is a unique conference bringing together educators and researchers of indigenous languages (mostly Native American[1] ones), most of whom work in and for programs at the primary and secondary levels. The conference program focuses on what is being done in various communities to reintroduce, revitalize, or stabilize indigenous languages. A great deal of effort is being put into Native American language programming. Dictionaries and grammar books, while still sometimes used, have been replaced in many schools with immersion-type programs and interactive computer software. The sheer volume of available materials and the commitment of those dedicating themselves to keeping Native American languages going are impressive. Invariably though, when asked about the level of fluency of students coming out of these programs, presenters claim that the languages are not very strong, that almost everywhere they are "dying out," and most are being replaced by English. This is disturbing, especially when there is widespread sentiment that one's language is intimately related to one's cultural identity. Why aren't these programs working, when so much is at stake, and so much tireless devotion is put into the goal of keeping these languages alive?

Various reasons for this have been proposed. Most have to do with the experiences of Native American children in government-operated residential and boarding schools, where Native languages were forbidden, and the infiltration of Euroamerican society into almost every aspect of Native American life (e.g. media such as television). In most Native American

communities the ancestral language has not been learned by anyone as a mother tongue for many years, and the responsibility for teaching the language to children has been placed on schools.

So, when children are taught their ancestral language at school, they are already speaking another language, most often English. Learning the structures of their ancestral language is difficult for them because these structures will be very different from those of English, but learning vocabulary is easier for them. What often happens is that, if they do begin to be able to speak their language, it is in a 'pidginized' form, often with English grammatical and phonological structures with vocabulary from the Native American language. The problem is that this pidgin language is not considered to be the 'real' language, and therefore we constantly hear of the failure of language programs to produce 'fluent' speakers.

Instead of asking why these programs are not working, and striving for what I believe to be unattainable goals, I would like to suggest that we look at the whole issue of language maintenance in a new way. More specifically, the languages as they are spoken should be accepted as new forms of Native American languages. If we can begin thinking and talking about Native American languages in a different way than we have been for the past few decades, we may be able to incorporate this way of thinking into language programming, and perhaps be more successful. To demonstrate how I arrived at this, I will begin with summarizing research that I conducted on the relationship between culture contact and linguistic change among the Kwakwaka'wakw of British Columbia. Kwak'wala, their language, is in a situation similar to many other Native American languages in that it is losing ground to English.[2] The mixed language spoken by young people is not considered to be 'good' Kwak'wala. Then, I will provide examples from North America and Russia where languages that arose out of culture

contact *were and in some cases continue to be* spoken, and three are considered to be Native languages in their own right (i.e. Chinuk Wawa, Michif, and Copper Island Aleut), while one, Louisiana Creole, is a French creole. If these are considered to be languages, why should other contact languages not be? There is a history of denigrating mixed languages among academics as well as within Native American communities. If we accept that language change is normal, perhaps our efforts at revitalizing Native American languages, albeit in their new forms, will become more successful.

Kwak'wala is a language of the northern branch of the Wakashan language family, and is spoken in British Columbia on the northern and north eastern parts of Vancouver Island, the adjacent mainland, and the islands in between (fig. 1). In the literature, the language and the culture have both been referred to with some rendering of the term Kwaguilth, or Kwakiutl, however I prefer the terms the people use themselves, which is Kwak'wala for the language, and Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw for the people, literally "Kwak'wala-speaking people."

The history of contact between Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw and European colonizers is similar to that of many Native American communities. The first Europeans to encounter Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw came in 1786 and were the crew of the British explorer James Strange.[3] He was on the west coast of Vancouver Island only, and it was not until George Vancouver sailed between the mainland and the island in 1792 that Europeans realized it was an island.[4] After the early explorers, there was a brief period of sea-based trade in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, followed by land-based trade where the Hudson's Bay Company (which still has stores in Canada) set up various trading posts. There was no warfare, other than some minor skirmishes, but essentially the British gradually kept moving in, establishing the colonies of Vancouver Island and British

Columbia in the mid 1800s. British Columbia finally joined Canada as a province in 1871. This province is a bit of an anomaly in Canada in regards to agreements or treaties made between governments and indigenous inhabitants. Most of the rest of Canada is covered by treaties, but the early colonial government in BC did not feel the need to make agreements with the original occupants; they just allocated reserves (the equivalent to reservations in the US, albeit reserves are much smaller).

In education, and through various pieces of legislation, the cultures and languages of First Nations all over Canada, including BC, were under attack until recently, that is around the 1970s, when First Nations language and culture programs began appearing to try to undo some of the damage done through such institutions as residential schools. In the Kwakwaka'wakw area, with the imposition of the English language and British culture in schools, there was an attempt to eradicate the language and culture. This, of course, is not a unique example, as similar scenarios happened in most areas of North America. Now, when there is prestige in knowing the language and practicing the culture, Kwakwaka'wakw are actively establishing and maintaining their cultural identity, and one way for them to do this is through the use of Kwak'wala.

A problem exists, however, because there was a break in the transmission of Kwak'wala through the generations, largely due to these earlier attempts to wipe it out. How can a language be maintained if it is not being passed on to the young generations? Linguistic data I collected from three generations of present-day Kwak'wala speakers confirm that the language has changed significantly. The oldest speakers I worked with were all over 50 years of age, the middle generation were those between the ages of 25 and 50, and the young generation were those under 25. There is a noticeable change in the use of the language between the different

generations. What I did was try to elicit forms from all three generations to see what types of differences exist between them. As a base, I used material written by George Hunt and Franz Boas from the early 20th century.[5] Most readers are probably familiar with Franz Boas. George Hunt was a bilingual Kwak'wala-English speaking mixed heritage (Tlingit/English) man who lived in the northern Vancouver Island area and worked extensively with Boas. He is sometimes referred to as Boas' main 'informant,' but more recently he has been recognized as having contributed more substantially to Boas' publications on the Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw as an anthropologist in his own right.[6] Today, "Hunt" is the name of a very important family in the Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw area.

Kwak'wala is a polysynthetic language that uses extensive suffixing, whereas English is a more analytic language. Polysynthetic languages express in one term, by the addition of affixes to a stem, what analytic languages such as English express in a sentence with separate words. I attempted to see what types of constructions I would get from the different generations that would indicate grammatical changes. To ascertain whether there have been phonological changes to the language, I compared the pronunciations of the different generations of speakers.

The chart in figure 2 gives some examples from the data that show grammatical and phonological changes between generations of speakers. In the first example of grammatical change, we can see that the suffix for 'eye', -ʔstu, was used by both the oldest and middle generations, while an analytic construction based on English was offered by the young generation. We have didəʔstó from the two older generations, whereas at least one member of the

young generation provided the following analytic construction, díxidus gégasus, a literal translation of the English.

Similarly, members of the middle and oldest generations used the suffix -əχsta in their Kwak'wala for the English 'small mouth.' Although the two forms here are different, t̓ög̓ʷəχsta and amáʔiχsta, they both have the suffix. A speaker from the young generation again provided an analytic construction based on the English, amáʔi səms.

There are also examples of phonological changes between the generations. One change is in the loss of glottalization, which is a sound produced by closing the throat. In the word for 'ears,' the members of the oldest and middle generations provided the form with three glottalized consonants, while the younger generation did not glottalize any of these. Glottalized consonants do not occur in English. The second example shows the loss of uvulars, which are sounds produced in the area of the uvula at the top of the throat. In the examples from oldest and middle generations, the forms for 'eyes' have two uvular stops. The forms are different, but again both use uvulars. The speaker from the young generation, on the other hand, uses no uvular. Uvular stops do not occur in English. The final example shows the loss of velar fricatives, which are sounds produced by allowing a restricted amount of air to pass between the back of the tongue and the velum. In the word for 'beard,' the oldest and middle generations use a velar fricative, while the younger generation does not. Although the velar fricative occurs in the speech of the young generation (in díxidus), it was dropped here when followed by another fricative, in this case 's.' Velar fricatives do not occur in English either.

A subset of the lexicon, kin terms are not changing in form but it appears that they may be starting to be used in different ways. One factor in this may be that living arrangements among the Kwakwaka'wakw have changed from large houses, called bighouses, where several related nuclear families would live, to single nuclear family dwellings. Today when children begin attending school, they are already using English kin terms, since the first language they learn is English, which has a different way of organizing kin relations than Kwak'wala. In Kwak'wala, a younger same sex sibling (male or female) is čáyə, and an older same sex sibling (male or female) ńúla. Cross sex siblings, either younger or older, are referred to as wəq̓wá. In English, the sex of ego does not matter–girls and boys both have sisters, who are female siblings; and they both have brothers, who are male siblings. In Kwak'wala, it is the age and sex of the siblings in relation to ego that determines what kin term to use. In addition, the Kwak'wala sibling terms also extend to first cousins. How then does one teach English-speaking children that if you are a girl, all your female siblings who are older than you, and first cousins (who probably do not live with you), are called by one term, and it is the same term that boys use for their older male siblings? This may result in what Paul Friedrich refers to as "cognitive confusion."[7] So, when children are given instruction in Kwak'wala as a second language, it is very difficult to teach them to 'think about' kin relations in a different way. The indigenous system, known and used by the older generations (considered the correct one by their standards), of designating siblings according to whether they are older or younger and of the same sex as ego may be in the process of being replaced by terms that parallel the English system of sister and brother, which neither specify the sex of ego nor differentiate between older or younger siblings.

The linguistic data clearly indicate that the language is changing dramatically because of the influence of English, and it is generally thought, by Kwakwaka'wakw and linguists, that it is in the process of dying out. However, Kwakwaka'wakw continue to use Kwak'wala in certain contexts, and I believe this is to assert their cultural identity as Kwakwaka'wakw. There appear to be three contexts where Kwak'wala is used for this purpose (fig.3):[8]

1. ritual contexts

2. solidarity contexts

3. contexts of outside encounters

In ritual contexts, Kwakwaka'wakw identify with their past and continuing culture through the use of Kwak'wala in these contexts. This is illustrated by the vertical arrow, designating diachronic continuity. Ritual contexts include potlatches and other ceremonials that accompany special events such as the construction of a new building or canoe launching, where Kwak'wala is used during the speech-making. If the speech-maker is fluent, the entire speech will be in Kwak'wala. If the speech-maker is not fluent, he or she will use some Kwak'wala words and/or phrases during the speech which will otherwise be in English.

In solidarity contexts, Kwakwaka'wakw are maintaining their cultural ties to other members of their community. These contexts can be as diverse as two fluent speakers conversing in the home, to teaching Kwak'wala language lessons at school. The use of Kwak'wala establishes the identity of the interlocutors as members of the same cultural community. This is graphically illustrated here by the horizontal line, indicating synchronic identification with other group members.

In contexts of outside encounters, members are trying to highlight differences between themselves and non-Kwakwaka'wakw. In this sense, they are using their language as a boundary maintenance mechanism.[9] This is illustrated in the diagram by the two separate circles. A specific example of this is from a time I was in Kingcome Inlet, a Kwakwaka'wakw community, when there was a canoe-launch practice a few days before the actual launch. While teenage Kwakwaka'wakw paddlers were being given instruction on proper technique, some non-Native kayakers came up the river, and were obviously curious about what was going on. As they approached, a Kwakwaka'wakw woman yelled out to them in Kwak'wala. They looked a little bewildered, and everyone on the shore laughed. But I think more than just a funny incident was occurring here. By yelling out to them in Kwak'wala, she was stating that this was Kwakwaka'wakw territory. Further support of this comes from the fact that during the times I have been in Kwakwaka'wakw territory, I hear Kwak'wala spoken most frequently when there are visitors in the villages. Although I have distinguished them here for illustrative purposes, these contexts may overlap in everyday life.

So, I believe that, although Kwak'wala appears to be a dying language, it is being maintained as a marker of cultural identity in certain contexts. Language therefore is not only for the communication of ideas; it also has a symbolic function.

DYING LANGUAGES AND NEW LANGUAGES

Jane Hill[10] notes that the processes involved in dying languages are very similar to those that occur in the development of pidgins and creoles in their structures, as pidginization as a process has been described by Bill Samarin.[11] Therefore, if pidginization is a **process** that may

lead to either a language dying, or to a new language, why can't we think of Native American languages today as types of pidgins or mixed languages? If we look more closely at pidgins, creoles, and mixed languages, we can find many similarities to Kwak'wala as it is spoken today.

The most obvious similarity between so-called dying languages and the development of pidgins, creoles and mixed languages is that these always occur in the context of *language contact*, usually between a European colonial language and one or more indigenous languages. All Native American languages have been in contact with a European language (usually English) for at least the last two hundred years. During the last two or three decades, efforts have been made in Native American communities to revitalize ancestral languages largely due to the belief that a person's language is intimately linked to one's cultural identity. As we saw earlier in the case of Kwak'wala, a break in transmission occurred between older and younger generations due in large part to this imposition of European culture and values. Educators and researchers in the area of Native American language maintenance often comment that students are not speaking the 'real' or 'pure' language.[12] So, what are they speaking? Are they speaking the Native American language? Are they speaking English? Or, are they speaking a mixed language? Can a mixed language still be considered a language? Usually, the answer to the last question is no. My question is, why not?

Before proceeding with my argument that a mixed language is an acceptable form of a language, I will provide some examples of pidgins, creoles, and mixed languages to be better able to compare them to current forms of Native American languages. *Pidgins* are languages that are "primarily used as a means of communication among people who do not share a common language."[13] Pidgin languages are usually not anyone's mother tongue, that is, they are not the

first language learned by a child. They develop in an attempt by people speaking two languages to communicate, and involve processes of simplification in phonology and grammar. Pidgins develop in different contexts. Some of these are for conducting trade; for interethnic contact of a religious, political, or ceremonial nature; or when people speaking different languages live and work together over an extended period of time.[14] Many pidgins developed in North, Central, and South America at various times in history when contact was made between Europeans and the Native peoples of the Americas.[15] For example, Chinuk Wawa (previously referred to as Chinook Jargon), spoken along the Northwest Coast of North America from present-day southern Oregon to Alaska, is a pidgin that was used primarily for trade, but also for ceremonial and religious purposes. A well-known word in anthropology, "potlatch," comes from Wawa 'pałač'[16] meaning 'give-away.' It is "based lexically upon Chinukan, Nootka, Salish, Kwakiutl, and (later) French and English, with smaller contributions from Hawaiian, Chinese, and other languages."[17] It is still spoken by a few people in British Columbia and Oregon, and there are efforts to revitalize it as a community language on the Grande Ronde and Warm Springs reservations in Oregon.[18] The following example illustrates the use of Lower Chinook, Nootkan, and English elements in a single Wawa phrase:[19]

ʔixt tənəs san (*L.C.* = Lower Chinook)

'one' 'child' 'sun'

ONE LITTLE DAY

L.C. Nootkan English

"one morning"

Creoles are languages that develop from pidgins that become more widespread and stabilized, and they usually become mother tongues or first languages. In comparison to a pidgin, a creole's vocabulary is expanded and its syntax is elaborated.[20] For example, Louisiana Creole developed among African American slaves of different linguistic origins in 18th century Louisiana, and is based on French, the language of their masters.[21] The Africans developed their own style of speaking French, which eventually became a language of its own, with different dialects.[22] Here is an example from the Pointe Coupee dialect of this creole:[23]

mo pele nom-la[24] ("J'ai appelé l'homme" in standard French)

'me' 'called' 'man'

"I called the man"

Here we see the use of *mo* (from 'moi') as a subject rather than an object as in standard French.

Mixed languages are somewhat different from pidgins and creoles. Essentially, a mixed language uses the vocabulary of one language with the grammar of another.[25] For example,

Michif, the language of Métis people, combines Cree grammar with mostly French vocabulary, although some of the vocabulary is Cree as well.[26] This language developed out of the interaction between French fur traders and Cree people (primarily Cree women) prior to the 1800s in the area of present-day Winnipeg in Manitoba. It is currently spoken by about 1,000 people in the Plains area of Canada and the United States, most speakers being over 60 years of age.[27] Its future, like many indigenous languages, is threatened.[28] Here is an example of Michif where different combinations of French and Cree can be used to say the same thing. Cree is written in italics, and French in bold. These examples come from different communities.[29]

(1)

miša:hta **la** **mæ̃zū** (IMP = imperative)

'big.make'.IMP 'the' 'house'

"Enlarge the house."

(2)

ply **gru** *ušta* **la** **mæ̃zū**

'more' 'big' 'make.it'.IMP 'the' 'house'

"Enlarge the house."

In both Louisiana Creole and Michif, we see that contact languages act similarly to other languages in that dialects develop over time when speakers become geographically distinct.

Another mixed language is Copper Island Aleut, a combination of Russian and Aleut, spoken in the Aleutian Islands. Stems and grammatical markers in this language come from

either Russian or Aleut, as in the following examples, where items of Aleut origin are in italics, and those of Russian origin in bold.[30]

axsa = *y* = **it**

'die' = -/- = 3sg

"He/she/it dies."

Here the stem 'axsa' (die) is Aleut, while the Russian ending '-it' indicates third person singular. Stems can also be from Russian, as in the following example:

stiiklaxx *sixxa* = *xxtaa* = *y* = **it davnu**

'glass break' = result =-/- =3sg 'long ago'

"The glass has been broken for a long time."

Here the stems 'stiiklaxx' (glass) and 'davnu' (long ago) are from Russian, while the stem 'sixxa' (break) is Aleut. 'xxtaa' is an Aleut resultative marker, and the marker for third person singular '-it' is again from Russian. So, I think we can safely say that Copper Island Aleut is a mixed language.

Now that we've seen some examples of this language, let's turn to a discussion of how it may have developed. One interesting explanation for the emergence of Copper Island Aleut has been proposed by Nikolai Vakhtin. In his scenario (which has not been substantiated by historical 'fact'), at some point in history, younger generations of Aleuts who spoke Russian as a

mother tongue (like young generations of Native Americans who speak English) felt the need to communicate to older Aleut speakers in their ancestral tongue, to show their identity as Aleuts. So, they began mixing the languages by using Russian grammar with Aleut vocabulary that they knew.[31] The members of the older generation supported this attempt, and gradually a new mixed language emerged, which eventually came to be used as an everyday means of communication. After several generations of use, the language became the main one of the community. It is interesting to note that today, Copper Island Aleut "is considered by all its speakers to be a 100 per cent native Aleut language."[32]

We do need to recognize that there are differences between pidgins, creoles, mixed languages, and the "new languages" that are spoken in Native American communities today. These new languages tend to be very simple structurally and are usually used only in specific situations.[33] However, what they all share is that they all developed out of language and culture contact and show some structural similarities. Christine Jourdan believes that pigeon-holing languages (no pun intended) as either pidgins or creoles on the basis of whether or not they become someone's mother tongue does not reflect the reality of language use. Pidgins as second languages may become very widespread and elaborated.[34] Even though, at this point, many Native American languages are rarely used, in whatever form, there is no reason why they cannot become community languages through good language planning. A fine example of this comes from Belfast, Ireland, where eleven families decided they wanted their children to learn Irish Gaelic, their ancestral language, as well as English. None of the adults were native speakers of Gaelic. They bought houses in the same community, learned Gaelic themselves, and spoke it to their children in the home. The children learned English from the larger community outside their

little "Gaelic-speaking enclave" of eleven families, and in this way they became "true bilinguals."[35] However, since the parents were speaking Gaelic as a second language, I'm sure that it was different from the Gaelic of their ancestors. This is also being attempted by Daryl Baldwin, a member of the Ohio tribe, with the Native American language Miami. Baldwin is part of a research project to revitalize the language, and speaks only Miami with his family. His children are becoming bilingual in Miami and English. Baldwin claims that he and his family sometimes get "strange reactions" when speaking Miami outside the home: "Sometimes I'm in line waiting, speaking to my kids in Miami. … People will turn and say, 'You're in America. Speak American.' They don't have a clue that we really are speaking something that's more American than English." He also has come to the realization that he and his children will probably never be 'fluent' in the traditional sense of the word, but that they may "happen to gain a degree of fluency."[36] In my estimation, this degree of fluency would represent a new Native American language, since this is the one that will be passed on to future generations.

The fact is that what has been happening all over North America, and elsewhere, is that indigenous languages seem to be losing ground to European ones, particularly English, Spanish, and French. When Native American languages are infiltrated by vocabulary and grammar of a European language, this is often described as "language death," and there is a sense of inevitable doom, even before a language ceases to be spoken. It is true that many indigenous languages are no longer spoken, and so we have developed Native language programs that are attempting to revitalize languages that are no longer being learned as a mother tongue. In most cases, these programs are failing to produce fluent speakers because the indigenous languages being taught are very different from the mother tongues of the children in terms of grammar and phonology.

The learners may have difficulty because of what is sometimes referred to as "interference," which is "the tendency of second language learners to transfer patterns from their first language to the second language."[37] In the case of Kwak'wala, this interference can be attributed to a prolonged period of exposure to the English language and Eurocanadian culture, since English has become the mother tongue of Kwakwaka'wakw children. As we saw before, when Kwak'wala is learned as a second language (usually in the context of elementary school), it is influenced by the English grammatical and phonological structures which have already been established in the cognitive schemata of the child's linguistic repertoire. This is often not recognized, and it is assumed because of what has been termed the "*genetic fallacy*"[38] that Native American children, regardless of their mother tongue, should be able to learn their ancestral language with ease. When this doesn't happen, failure is the outcome, and often schools and/or teachers are blamed (teachers of Native languages are also expected to be Native Americans themselves–non-Native teachers, even if they are very familiar with the Native language, are usually unacceptable). These and other factors combine to make most Native language programs unsuccessful in their attempts to produce students fluent in their ancestral language:[39] "Most often, people aim too high, too soon, relative to the state the language is in."[40]

In my view, the greatest obstacle to keeping Native American languages thriving is a prevalent belief, held by linguists, language planners, teachers, and the general public, that a language must somehow be maintained in its "pure" form, which usually means the oldest form of the language now spoken by elderly people. So, a language that does not fit this ideal is labeled as "grammarless" and "less than fully formed."[41] People have certain ideologies about languages, in their form, use, and as badges of cultural identity. Language change that is

concomitant with colonialism is seen as just another factor in the oppression of Native American cultures, so it is sometimes hard for people to accept these changes. This ideological dimension of language change is understandable in the context of colonialism. Ironically however, people involved in maintaining indigenous languages often adopt the position held by the oppressors that languages must have a standard, and any variability due to dialectal differences or incursions by other languages is seen as decay.[42] So we constantly hear of how most Native American language programs are unsuccessful in their attempts to produce students fluent in their ancestral language.

However, if we make an analogy between language and culture (as is often done), we may come up with different conclusions. Today, in anthropology, it is no longer accepted that cultures "die" through colonial contact. This was the subject of acculturation studies of the 1950s and '60s. We now recognize that, in more than a material sense, cultures adapt to environments and change over time. Native Americans today have different societies from those of the past, but they are still Native American societies. Why can't language be looked at in the same way? Native American languages have evolved and adapted to their changing environments as well, but they're still Native American languages, and should be viewed as such.

So I believe the first step in making Native American language programs successful is to accept change as natural. Secondly, we should view languages that developed out of a culture contact situation as languages in their own right, not as being at a 'stage' in a dying language. They should be promoted in classrooms and communities.

If we go back to our discussion of changes to Kwak'wala, we might now view them in a different light. Why can't we say that some young Kwak'wala-speakers are speaking a type of

mixed Kwak'wala-English, or a 'Pidgin Kwak'wala'? In the examples of grammatical differences, the younger speaker is using an analogy with English when speaking Kwak'wala, so she is mixing the two languages by using Kwak'wala vocabulary with English grammar. In the phonological examples, we see a loss of some of the distinctive features of Kwak'wala probably because they do not exist in English. So, in essence, the younger speaker is speaking Kwak'wala with an 'English accent.' But she is understood by other Kwak'wala speakers.

So how can we apply this knowledge to the maintenance of indigenous languages? Because we know that all languages change in contact situations, perhaps we can use this to our advantage. If somehow the process of language change can be arrested so that it does not lead to a complete shift to English, there is a better chance for the indigenous language to continue, albeit in a different form, similar to a pidgin or mixed language.

In order to do this, one thing that must change is attitude. Contact languages all over the world suffer from a lack of prestige. In efforts to maintain indigenous languages, we would like the children to speak the same way that their grandparents do or even the way their great grandparents did. Is this a realistic goal? Are we setting the children, teachers, programs, and language planners up for failure? Of course, current efforts at revitalizing and/or maintaining indigenous languages are all well-intentioned; however, rather than saying such things as, 'the children are not speaking the language properly' because they may use some English vocabulary or grammar, perhaps this use of language should be encouraged and accepted as a new and different language. Is it taking it too far to suggest the development of language programs based on the new language? Pidgin Kwak'wala, for example? This may be the way we must go in the future anyway once the responsibility for maintaining the indigenous languages falls to the

generations who speak the language imperfectly, usually those who learn it as a second language.[43] In Alert Bay, where there is a Kwakwaka'wakw community, the main Kwak'wala language teacher will soon be retiring, and her grand-daughter may take over this task. The grand-daughter is currently teaching some Kwak'wala language and culture at a high school in a nearby community where Kwakwaka'wakw students from Alert Bay attend grades 10 through 12 (the Band-operated school in Alert Bay goes to grade 9 only). In Kingcome Inlet, in the summer of 2002 they began a Kwak'wala language immersion program for about 30 young people who have some knowledge of the language. The aim of the program is to pair students on a one-to-one basis with elders from the community for several weeks. Kwak'wala is the second language of these young people, and certainly even after their immersion experience they will be teaching a language quite different from that of their teachers. However, the effort is being made to maintain the language, even in a different form.

Even though young Kwak'wala speakers may not be using the language of their elders, they are nonetheless very proud of their ability to speak their ancestral language, as long as they are not criticized. If this phenomenon could become more widespread, we might see the resurgence of new Native languages all over North America. For this scenario to happen, however, the following must occur: there must be a perceived social status in speaking the Native language, in whatever form, as a marker of cultural identity. I think that in most, if not all regions of North America, it is now very prestigious to speak a Native language, but this must be extended to the recognition and acceptance of the new languages by fluent speakers. This is exactly what I am proposing we encourage in Native American communities today. If the language continues to be spoken in its present form, it may become a community language, as

long as it is accepted as such, and as long as people can claim their cultural identity through its use.

CONCLUSION

I think the time has come for us to stop talking about language death, and start talking about language change. In schools, we could have two types of classes: those in the 'classical' language, where students study the language as it has been written down over the past few hundred years; and classes in the language as it is currently used by most community members. This might be fun for students as well, and maybe they would feel less inhibited about using this new language out in the real world. In all Native American communities where there is language programming, this is exactly what people are trying to do: take the language out of the classroom and into the community. Community activities could focus on the use of the language, in whatever form. Maybe then we'll start hearing more about success in revitalizing Native American languages, and less about failure.

1. Throughout this article I use the term "Native American" to refer collectively to indigenous populations of what are now known as Canada and the United States. I use "First Nations" when I am referring specifically to indigenous people of Canada, as it is the term most widely used in this country. The politics of creating ethnic identities through naming is relevant here, but will not be discussed (but will be perhaps in a future paper).

2. In this paper, I have used the spelling conventions for Kwakwaka'wakw and Kwak'wala that are used in the communities. For the linguistic data, I have used an Americanist version of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

3. Helen Codere, "Kwakiutl: Traditional Culture," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 7, Northwest Coast*, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 363.

4. George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World: Volume 1* (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, and J. Edwards, 1798), 343-353. (Reprinted in 1967 by Da Capo Press).

5. Franz Boas, "Kwakiutl: An Illustrative Sketch," in *Handbook of American Indian Languages: Bulletin 40, Part 1* (Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1910).

6. For example, see Regna Darnell, "The Pivotal Role of the Northwest Coast in the History of Americanist Anthropology," *BC Studies* 125 /126 (2000): 44-48.

7. Paul Friedrich, "The Linguistic Reflex of Social Change: From Tsarist to Soviet Russian Kinship," in *Explorations in Sociolinguistics*, ed. Stanley Lieberson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 48.

8. For a more complete discussion of these contexts, see author, *Talking in Context: Language and Identity in Kwakwaka'wakw Society*, forthcoming.

9. See introduction to Fredrik Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969); and preface to William C. McCready, ed., *Culture, Ethnicity, and Identity: Current Issues in Research* (New York: Academic Press, 1983).

10. Jane H. Hill, "Language Death, Language Contact, and Language Evolution," in *Approaches to Language: Anthropological Issues*, ed. William C. McCormack and Stephen A. Wurm (Paris, Mouton, 1978), 46.

11. William Samarin, "Salient and Substantive Pidginization," in *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, ed. Dell H. Hymes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

12. For discussions of enforcement of language purity, see Bonnie Urciuoli, *Exposing Prejudice: Puerto Rican Experiences of Language, Race, and Class* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996); Kathryn A. Woolard, "Introduction: Language Ideology as a Field of Inquiry," in *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, ed. Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Judith T. Irvine and Susan Gal, "Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation," in *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Polities, and Identities*, ed. Paul V. Kroskrity (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2000); Paul V. Kroskrity, "Regimenting Languages: Language Ideological Perspectives," in Kroskrity, *Regimes of Language*.

13. Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith, "The Study of Pidgin and Creole Languages," in *Pidgins and Creoles: An Introduction*, ed. Jacques Arends, Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1995), 3.

14. Peter Bakker, "Pidgins," in ed. Arends et al., *Pidgins and Creoles*, 27-28.

15. For historical descriptions of pidgin development, particularly on the eastern seaboard of North America, see ed. Edward G. Gray and Norman Fiering, *The Language Encounter in the Americas, 1492-1800: A Collection of Essays* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000).

16. Laurence C. Thompson and M. Dale Kinkade, "Languages," in ed. Suttles, *Handbook of North American Indians*, 50.

17. Ian Hancock, "The Special Case of Arctic Pidgins," in *Language Contact in the Arctic: Northern Pidgins and Contact Languages*, ed. Ernst Håkon Jahr and Ingvild Broch (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1996), 15.

18. Tony A. Johnson and Henry B. Zenk, "Chinuk-Wawa: History and Revitalization of a Northwest Native Mixed Language." Paper presented at the *7th Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference: Language Across the Community*. Toronto, May 11-14, 2000.

19. Ibid.

20. Zdenek Salzmann, *Language, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 174-175.

21. Until 1763, the Louisiana Territory was controlled by France. See Nancy Bonvillain, *Native Nations: Cultures and Histories of Native North America* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2001), 137-138.

22. See Thomas A. Klinger, "Louisiana Creole: The Multiple-Geneses Hypothesis Reconsidered, *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 15 (1) (2000).

23. Ibid.

24. Klinger does not discuss the meaning of "-la" here, as "nom" is obviously the cognate

of the French "homme." In some dialects of Québec French, "lá" (lit. "there" usually pronounced "lo") operates as a type of tag at the end of a phrase or sentence, similar to Canadian English's "eh." Perhaps it has the same function in Louisiana French.

25. Peter Bakker and Pieter Muysken, "Mixed Languages and Language Intertwining," in ed. Arends et al., *Pidgins and Creoles*, 41.

26. Ibid., 45-46.

27. Norval Smith, "An Annotated List of Creoles, Pidgins, and Mixed Languages," in ed. Arends et al., *Pidgins and Creoles*, 370.

28. Norman Fleury, "History of the Michif Languages from a Michif Person's Perspective." Paper presented at the *7th Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference: Language Across the Community*. Toronto, May 11-14, 2000.

29. From Peter Bakker and Robert A. Papen, "Michif: A Mixed Language Based on Cree and French," in *Contact Languages: A Wider Perspective*, ed. Sarah G. Thomason (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1997).

30. All examples are from Nikolai Vakhtin, "Copper Island Aleut: A Case of Language 'Resurrection,'" in *Endangered Languages: Language Loss and Community Response*, ed. Lenore A. Grenoble and Lindsay J. Whaley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

31. Ibid., 324.

32. Ibid., 327.

33. Victor Golla, personal communication.

34. Christine Jourdan, "Pidgins and Creoles: The Blurring of Categories," in *Annual Review of Anthropology Volume 20*, ed. Bernard J. Siegel (Palo Alta: Annual Reviews Inc.,

1991).

35. Kenneth Hale, "On Endangered Languages and the Importance of Linguistic Diversity," in ed. Grenoble and Whaley, *Endangered Languages*, 214.

36. Bill Sloat, "A New Generation Gives Voice to a Native Tongue," *The Plain Dealer* 06/04/01, [http://members.tripod.com/TopCat4/news/4jun01.txt], September 12, 2001.

37. John J. Gumperz and Jenny Cook-Gumperz, "Introduction: Language and the Communication of Social Identity," in *Language and Social Identity*, ed. John J. Gumperz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 16.

38. Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, "Technical, Emotional, and Ideological Issues in Reversing Language Shift: Examples from Southeast Alaska," in ed. Grenoble and Whaley, *Endangered Languages*, 83.

39. Ibid., 83-84.

40. Ibid., 97.

41. Woolard, "Introduction," 17.

42. Ibid.

43. For a discussion of differences in and problems between generations of Native American language curriculum developers see Timothy Montler, "Language and Dialect Variation in Straits Salishan," *Anthropological Linguistics* 41 (4) (1999): 489. Also see James Collins, "Our Ideologies and Theirs," in Schieffelin et al., where he "was warned to work with 'real speakers'" when working on the Tolowa language of northern California (p. 264).

Figure 1. Map of Kwakwaka'wakw Territory (approximate boundaries)

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Figure 2. Differences in Generations of Kwak'wala Speakers

Examples of Grammatical Differences

suffix =ʔstu (eye, door, round opening)

"to wipe your eyes"

Older generation	Middle generation	Younger generation
didəʔstó wipe=eye	didəʔstó	díxidus gégasus you wipe-your eyes

suffix =əx̣st(a) (opening; mouth of animal; to eat, meal; to talk about)

"small mouth"

Older generation	Middle generation	Younger generation
t̓ó̱gʷəx̣sta narrow opening=mouth	amáʔix̣sta small=mouth	amáʔi səms small - mouth

Examples of Phonological Differences

Loss of Glottalization (glottalized "p")

Older generation	Middle generation	Younger generation
p̓əsp̓ay̓ú (ears)	p̓əsp̓ay̓ú	pəspəyú

Loss of Uvular (back "g")

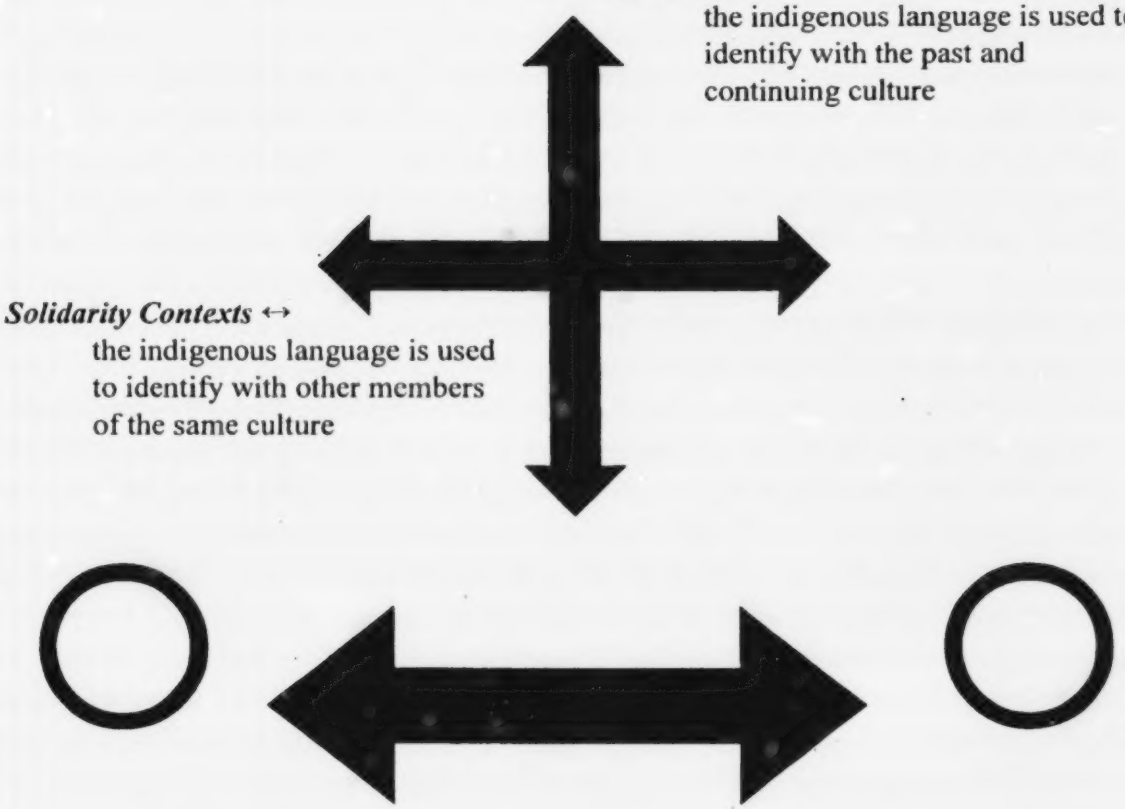
Older generation	Middle generation	Younger generation
g̱ayág̱as (eyes)	gəʔég̱əs	gégasus

Loss of Velar Fricative (loss of "x")*

Older generation	Middle generation	Younger generation
həbəxstéʔ (beard)	həbəxstá	həbəstá

* It is interesting that this seems to occur only when the velar fricative is followed by another fricative, here "s". We see the use of "x" above in the example "dixidus gegasus" where it is preceded and followed by a vowel.

Figure 3. Contexts of Speaking Kwak'wala


Ritual Contexts ↕
the indigenous language is used to identify with the past and continuing culture
Solidarity Contexts ↔
the indigenous language is used to identify with other members of the same culture
Contexts of Outside Encounters
the indigenous language is used as a boundary maintenance mechanism to distinguish the speaker(s) from non-Kwakwaka'wakw

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